

Notice of Allowability

Application No.

09/995,822

Applicant(s)

JEANBLANC ET AL.

Examiner

Joseph P. Hirl

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2129

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. ☒ This communication is responsive to March 28, 2006.
2. ☒ The allowed claim(s) is/are 1-28.
3. ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some* c) ☐ None of the:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. ☐ A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. ☐ CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
- (a) ☐ including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
- 1) ☐ hereto or 2) ☐ to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- (b) ☐ including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.
- Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. ☐ DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

1. ☐ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
2. ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
3. ☐ Information Disclosure Statements (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08), Paper No./Mail Date _____
4. ☐ Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit of Biological Material
5. ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
6. ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413), Paper No./Mail Date _____
7. ☐ Examiner's Amendment/Comment
8. ☒ Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance
9. ☐ Other _____



Reasons for Allowance

1. Claims 1-28 are allowed.
2. The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The cited prior art taken alone or in combination fails to teach the claims invention of a knowledge system and method that embodies the following:

Community of Practice: is a group of persons (most typically in a single organization) grouped together for a common purpose or to achieve a common goal. For example, a community of practice may be formed to develop a training program for employees in a division, or to create a set of standards for a new product line. A community of practice is not necessarily based on formal divisions within the organization, but may include members from many divisions who are involved in an aspect of the organization or a particular project. Also included in the community of practice is a set of procedures, best practices and standards that the community of practice can use in working towards the purpose or goal. After the goal or purpose is accomplished, the community of practice can continue as an organizational resource. (Specification, p 5 ¶19)

The community of practice includes a knowledge management architecture, a plurality of users, one or more experts, and one or more community of practice managers, all interconnected by a network. The knowledge management architecture includes a web server module, a security module, an e-mail server, a knowledge database, and a document management system. (Specification P 4, ¶10)

Expert is similar to user but has been identified within community of practice as having special knowledge. Users may obtain the status of expert through, inter alia, significant participation in a community of practice. In addition to interacting with other entities in the community of practice and submitting and accessing knowledge, expert may participate in approving knowledge submitted by users. (Specification P 6, ¶21)

Community of practice manager functions as the facilitator and moderator for community of practice. Community of practice manager may be responsible for review, validation, and dissemination of knowledge in the community of practice and such organization may include one or more managers. (Specification, P 6, ¶22)

Network may be the Internet, a wireless local area network or another type of network. (Specification, P 7, ¶23)

Knowledge management architecture may include a security module, a Web server/application host module, an e-mail server, a knowledge database, and a document management system. Security module, Web server module and e-mail server interface with the network. Web server module is connected to e-mail server. Web server module is also connected to knowledge database and document management system. (Specification, P 7, ¶24)

Security module may determine what type of access each entity in the community of practice has with respect to knowledge database and /or the document management system. For example, users may access knowledge in the knowledge database but may not alter the knowledge. Further, users who wish to add knowledge to

knowledge database may require approval of the knowledge before the knowledge is added. (Specification, P 7, ¶25)

Web server/application host module includes an interface for entities to access knowledge database as well as document management system. Further, web server module may include additional capabilities, such as collaboration tools to permit entities in community of practice to work together, bulletin boards to permit entities in community of practice to communicate with each other, and/or search engines to provide efficient access to specific knowledge entities in knowledge database or document management system. (Specification, P 8, ¶26)

E-mail server provides users, expert and community of practice manager with updated information from knowledge management architecture. (Specification, P 8, ¶27)

Knowledge database contains approved knowledge entities, standards, tools, and other information used by entities in the community of practice. (Specification, P 8, ¶28)

Document management system provides access to documents stored in a number of different formats, such as word processing format, spread sheet format, or presentation format (Specification, P 8, ¶29)

Goals of the community of practice may include the goals or purposes for which the community of practice was formed. For example, goals may be product-oriented, such as creating a design guide for a new product or developing a software product for testing a new product. (Specification, P 10, ¶33)

In summary, the community of practice is a specialty organization established on the basis of a goal (s) that cuts across conventional division lines, staffed with experts and users that are near experts to achieve a goal(s), supported by a knowledge management architecture embodying a security system, a Web server, an e-mail server, a knowledge database and a document management system to support collaborative interactions among members of the community of practice. The knowledge base contains standards and tools, and knowledge gathered from the parent organization and members of the community of practice and such knowledge is ordered based on identified roles and responsibilities and the one or more goals and the sharing of such knowledge by the participants of the community of practice. Membership solicitation and information reflecting acceptance is achieved through the knowledge management system.

The closest prior art, (Mui et al, USPubN 2003/0229529), teaches method for enterprise workforce planning to be used in a business systems platform to integrate disparate business application systems in an efficient manner, across multiple hardware platforms. Mui does not teach a specialty organization established on the basis of a goal (s) that cuts across conventional division lines, staffed with experts and users that are near experts, supported by a knowledge management architecture embodying a security system, a Web server, an e-mail server, a knowledge database and a document management system, and facilitating collaborative interactions among members of the community of practice to achieve the founding goal.

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Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Correspondence Information

3. Any inquiry concerning this information or related to the subject disclosure should be directed to the Primary Examiner, Joseph P. Hirl, whose telephone number is (571) 272-3685. The Examiner can be reached on Monday – Thursday from 6:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

If attempts to reach the Examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the Examiner's supervisor, David R. Vincent can be reached at (571) 272-3080.

Any response to this office action should be mailed to:

Commissioner of Patents and Trademarks,

Washington, D. C. 20231;

Hand delivered to:

Receptionist,

Customer Service Window,

Randolph Building,

401 Dulany Street,

Alexandria, Virginia 22313,

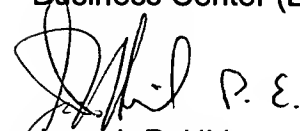
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(located on the first floor of the south side of the Randolph Building);

or faxed to:

(571) 273-8300 (for formal communications intended for entry.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have any questions on access to Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll free).


Joseph P. Hirl
Primary Examiner
June 6, 2006